

Message Text

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INFO RUQMNS/AMEMBASSY SANA 0000

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY DOHA

AMEMBASSY MANAMA

AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI

AMEMBASSY MUSCAT

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

AMCONSUL DHAHRAN

USLO RIYADH

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FOLLOWING REPEAT SANA 3820 ACTION SECSTATE INFO JIDDA SECDEF
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QUOTE: S E C R E T SANA 3820

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PGOV, PEPR, YE, YS

SUBJ: RADICALISM OF THE PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF
YEMEN

BEGIN SUMMARY: PDRY IS NOT JUST ANOTHER MEMBER OF
ARAB "STEADFASTNESS" GROUP, LIKE SYRIA AND ALGERIA. IT
IS A TRUE RADICAL STATE. WE SHOULD WEIGH OUR WILLING-
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NESS TO PROVIDE MILITARY AID TO YAR AGAINST PDRY
INTENTIONS AND MILITARY CAPABILITIES. END SUMMARY.

1. WITH THE PURGES THAT HAVE FOLLOWED THE COUP AGAINST
SALIM RUBAYI ALI, TOTAL CONTROL IN PDRY HAS FALLEN INTO
THE HANDS OF A RELATIVELY SMALL GROUP OF NATIONAL FRONT
LOYALISTS WHO HAVE WILLINGLY SOLD THEMSELVES TO A

DISTINCTLY ALIEN FORM OF GOVERNMENT.

2. PDRY RADICALISM TODAY CONSISTS OF THE PRACTICE OF THE EXPORT OF REVOLUTION, COLLECTIVIZATION OF AGRICULTURE AND INDUSTRY, IDEOLOGICAL HOSTILITY TO ITS NEIGHBORS IN THE PENINSULA, SOCIALIST INTERNATIONALISM RATHER THAN NATIONALISM, AND HEAVY COMMITMENT TO TERRORISM AS A POLITICAL ACT. THE PDRY POLITICAL ALIGNMENTS WITH ETHIOPIA AGAINST SOMALIA AND, TO A LESSER DEGREE, AGAINST ERITREA FLY DIRECTLY IN THE FACE OF NATURAL SOUTH ARABIAN TENDENCY TOWARDS COMMUNALITY OF INTERESTS WITH FELLOW MUSLIMS. THE ROLE OF THE PARTY IN PDRY HAS GROWN TO A POINT WHERE IT TOTALLY CONTROLS THE SOCIETY, DOWN TO THE VILLAGE AND EVEN BLOCK LEVEL. ENFORCED SCHOOLING OF CHILDREN, AWAY FROM THE CONTROL OF THE PARENTS, SEEKS TO BUILD A NEW GENERATION OF CHILDREN ALIGNED MORE WITH THE RED STAR THAN THE KORAN. THE REGIME'S "POPULARITY" TODAY IS SUCH THAT IT IS FORCED TO SEAL ITS BORDERS AGAINST THE FLIGHT OF ITS OWN PEOPLE AND TO LEVY EXORBITANT FEES AND GUARANTEES ON THOSE WISHING TO TRAVEL ABROAD LEGALLY UP TO AND INCLUDING THE TAKING OF HOSTAGES. TO BOLSTER ITS OWN ARMED FORCES, PDRY HAS TURNED TO COMMUNIST MERCENARIES SUCH AS THE CUBANS, EAST GERMANS, RUSSIANS, AND -- ACCORDING TO SOME SOURCES -- ETHIOPIANS, BULGARIANS, AND EVEN NORTH KOREANS. THE ETHIOPIANS ARE APPARENTLY SECRET

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RETURNING THE FAVOR DONE THEM BY PDRY AGAINST THE ERITREANS AND SOMALIS.

3. TRIMMING ITS SAILS TO THE PREVAILING WINDS, PDRY TODAY IS AVIDLY COURTING OTHER ARABS FOR FINANCIAL SUPPORT. ITS PIOUS PROCLAMATIONS OF PEACEFUL INTENTIONS ARE UTTERED IN THE HOPE OF SPLITTING THE ARAB LEAGUE BOYCOTT AND OFFSETTING ITS CONDEMNATION. IT IS FAIRLY CERTAIN IN THIS EMBASSY THAT ONCE PDRY SUCCEEDS IN SPLITTING THE ARAB RANKS AGAINST THE BOYCOTT -- AS IS BEING DONE IN KUWAIT -- THEN WE WILL SEE A RETURN TO THE TRUE NATURE OF PDRY -- EXPORT OF REVOLUTION, ASSASSINATION, AND SUBVERSION AGAINST ITS NEIGHBORS IN THE ARABIAN PENINSULA AND THE GULF.

4. IT IS ALSO IMPORTANT TO NOTE THAT THE PDRY ARMED FORCES TODAY MAY BE ALMOST AS LARGE AS THE COMBINED FORCES OF ALL ITS NEIGHBORS IN THE PENINSULA. THERE MAY BE 30,000 MEN IN ARMY, 10,000 MEN IN MILITIA (POPULAR FORCES), AND 10,000 MORE IN PARA-MILITARY POPULAR POLICE FORCE. THERE ARE OVER 120 MILITARY ATTACK AIR-CRAFT, SAMS -- 3'S, 6'S AND 7'S, 300 TANKS (PERHAPS

INCLUDING SOME T-62'S) AND THE DIRECT SUPPORT OF SOVIET NAVAL UNITS AND CUBAN TROOPS. WHILE PDRY IS FOR THE MOMENT BEING WRACKED WITH INTERNAL STRIFE, PARTICULARLY IN THE GOVERNORATES OUTSIDE OF ADEN, TIME IS ON THE SIDE OF THE PDRY REGIME. THE CURRENT GOVERNMENT IN PDRY CAN BE EXPECTED TO EXPLOIT THE AVAILABLE TIME TO CONSOLIDATE ITS PRECARIOUS POSITION WITH THE HELP OF ITS SOVIET AND CUBAN ALLIES, PUT DOWN INTERNAL OPPOSITION, PURGE THE ARMED FORCES, AND DESTROY ANY VESTIGES OF INTERNAL OPPOSITION. THEN WE CAN EXPECT TO SEE PDRY BEGIN AGAIN ITS MULTI-POINTED ATTEMPTS AT SUBVERSION AGAINST THE YAR AND OMAN AND -- IN THE END -- SAUDI ARABIA. IT HAS FEW ALTERNATIVES. IT HAS FAILED TO PROVIDE FOR ITS PEOPLE. ITS ECONOMY IS COMPLETELY MILITARIZED. IT
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IS INDIFFERENT TO KILLING. IT MUST JUSTIFY ITSELF BY EXPANDING.

5. GIVEN THE SOCIAL AND POLITICAL FRAGILITY OF MANY OF THE STATES OF THE REGION, ASSASSINATION STILL CARRIES MORE WEIGHT HERE THAN ANY NUMBER OF AIRCRAFT OR BATTALIONS. THE LIST OF PDRY-INVOLVED ASSASSINATIONS IS LENGTHY--MANY PUBLIC KNOWLEDGE, MANY NOT--COMMAND COUNCIL MEMBER MOHAMMED ALI UTHMAN IN TAIZ, QADI ABDULLAH AL-HAJRI IN LONDON, FOREIGN MINISTER MOHAMMED NU'MAN IN BEIRUT, AHMED AL-GHASHMI IN SANA, PLUS UNNUMBERED SHAYKHS, QADIS AND CIVIL SERVANTS IN THE SOUTHERN AND MIDDLE REGIONS OF THE YAR.

6. PDRY LEADERSHIP, ALSO, IS KEENLY AWARE OF THE CONSEQUENCES OF GOING AGAINST THE WISHES OF THE SOVIETS AND IS, IN SUM, NO LONGER MASTER OF ITS HOWN HOUSE. WHILE MUCH DISCUSSION HAS TAKEN PLACE OVER THE SUBJECT OF BASE AGREEMENTS FOR THE SOVIETS IN PDRY, EMBASSY SUBMITS THAT SUCH FORMALITIES ARE IRRELEVANT AND UN-NECESSARY TO THE PRESENT SITUATION IN PDRY. THE SOVIETS CONTROL THE MILITARY USE OF THE AIRFIELDS AND ELECTRONIC EQUIPMENT OF ANY SOPHISTICATION, AND CUBANS ARE THERE TO ENFORCE THEIR WISHES. WHILE THERE HAS BEEN NO HARD INFORMATION ABOUT A FORMAL BASE-RIGHTS TREATY--SUCH AS WAS THE CASE IN SOMALIA--FOR ALL INTENTS AND PURPOSES, SUCH AN AGREEMENT DOES, WE BELIEVE, EXIST. WE DON'T KNOW HOW FAR THE SOVIETS--ALTHOUGH BOLDER THESE DAYS THAN EVER BEFORE--ARE PREPARED TO BACK UP OR PRESS PDRY AGGRESSION BUT THEY ARE A HIGH BARRIER TO PDRY RECONCILIATION WITH ITS NEIGHBORS.

7. THE PDRY THREAT TO THE YAR AND OMAN CAN TAKE MANY
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FORMS AMONG THE MORE SERIOUS ARE:

(A) CONTINUED SUPPORT TO THE SUBVERSION IN THE MIDDLE REGIONS OF THE YAR SUCH AS DAMTH, NADIRA, JUBN.

ALSO, FORMER PARATROOP COMMANDER ABDULLAH 'ABD AL-ALIM CAN BE EXPECTED TO RETURN PERIODICALLY TO THE HUIYARIYA REGION TO RALLY HIS FOLLOWERS AND TO EXACERBATE THE TRADITIONAL ANTI-NORTHERNER FEELINGS PRESENT THERE.

(B) ASSASSINATION OF KEY YAR GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS IN THE CAPITAL AND IN OUTLYING PROVINCES. THE POSSIBILITY STILL EXISTS FOR A SUDDEN DESTABILIZATION OF THE YAR BY A SWIFT, CALCULATED ACT OF ASSASSINATION AS WAS THE CASE WITH AL-GHASHMI. THE UNDERGROUND INFRASTRUCTURE EXISTS IN THE YAR FOR SUCH AN ACT AND DESPITE THE BEST EFFORTS OF YAR SECURITY OFFICIALS, FACTIONALISM, TRIBAL POLITICS, BA'ATHI ACTIVITY AND OTHER PDRY-SUPPORTED ELEMENTS ALL ARE HERE IN SUFFICIENT STRENGTH AND DETERMINATION TO MAKE THE ASSASSINATION OPTION A VERY REAL THREAT. EMBASSY JUDGES THAT WE HAVE NOT, UNFORTUNATELY SEEN THE LAST OF ASSASSINATION IN THE YAR. WITH AID GIVEN BY PDRY TO CARLOS AND OTHERS OF HIS ILK, PDRY HAS A CAPACITY FOR LONG-RANGE TERRORISM, TOO

(C) DIRECT MILITARY ACTION. WHILE THE PDRY ARMED FORCES ARE CURRENTLY IN A STATE OF DISARRAY, THIS SHOULD NOT BE CONSIDERED A LONG-TERM SAFETY NET FOR THE YAR. THE 'ABBAS, SHALLAL, BASIBIB, 30TH, AND OTHER BRIGADES MAY BE INCAPACITED, BUT THEY STILL EXIST AND CAN BE RE-BUILT RAPIDLY. THE HIGHLY-POLITICIZED MILITIA, ALONG WITH CUBAN "ADVISORS" HAVE TAKEN ON THE ROLE OF PROTECTOR OF THE REGIME, PENDING THE FINAL REORGANIZATION AND PURGE OF THE REGULAR ARMED FORCES. DESPITE ALL THIS, THE EMBASSY DOES NOT THINK IT WILL TAKE MORE THAN SIX MONTHS OR SO FOR PDRY TO PUT ITSELF IN A MILITARY POSITION SUCH THAT THE MILITARY OPTION IS A VIABLE CONSIDERATION FOR USE AGAINST THE YAR, UNHAMPERED BY POLITICAL, TRIBAL, OR LEGAL RESTRAINTS AND WITH THE HELP OF THE SOVIETS.

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COMMENT: PDRY IS IN A LULL PERIOD AND IT APPEARS ITS ARMED FORCES HAVE ASSUMED WHAT BASICALLY IS A DEFENSIVE POSTURE. YAR MILITARY OFFICERS HAVE CONFIRMED PRIVATELY THAT THEY FEEL NO IMMEDIATE THREAT FROM PDRY. NEVERTHELESS, ITS INTENTIONS AND ITS CAPABILITIES ARE DEEPLY WORRISOME, WE WOULD NOT UNDERESTIMATE THE SOUTH IN

GAUGING OUR RESPONSE THE MILITARY NEEDS OF THE YAR.
RANSOM

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CHRISTOPHER

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